

AMENDMENT OF SOLICITATION/MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT				1. CONTRACT ID CODE			
2. AMENDMENT/MODIFICATION NO.		3. EFFECTIVE DATE		4. REQUISITION/PURCHASE REQ. NO.		5. PROJECT NO. (If applicable)	
6. ISSUED BY CODE				7. ADMINISTERED BY (If other than Item 6) CODE			
8. NAME AND ADDRESS OF CONTRACTOR (No., street, county, State and ZIP Code)				(X)		9A. AMENDMENT OF SOLICIATION NO.	
						9B. DATED (SEE ITEM 11)	
						10A. MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT/ORDER NO.	
CODE		FACILITY CODE					

11. THIS ITEM ONLY APPLIES TO AMENDMENTS OF SOLICITATIONS

☐ The above numbered solicitation is amended as set forth in Item 14. The hour and date specified for receipt of Offers ☐ is extended, ☐ is not extended.  
Offers must acknowledge receipt of this amendment prior to the hour and date specified in the solicitation or as amended, by one of the following methods:  
(a) By completing items 8 and 15, and returning \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the amendment; (b) By acknowledging receipt of this amendment on each copy of the offer submitted;  
or (c) By separate letter or telegram which includes a reference to the solicitation and amendment numbers. FAILURE OF YOUR ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO BE RECEIVED AT THE  
PLACE DESIGNATED FOR THE RECEIPT OF OFFERS PRIOR TO THE HOUR AND DATE SPECIFIED MAY RESULT IN REJECTION OF YOUR OFFER. If by virtue of this amendment  
your desire to change an offer already submitted, such change may be made by telegram or letter, provided each telegram or letter makes reference to the solicitation and this  
amendment, and is received prior to the opening hour and date specified.

CHECK ONE	A. THIS CHANGE ORDER IS ISSUED PURSUANT TO: (Specify authority) THE CHANGES SET FORTH IN ITEM 14 ARE MADE IN THE CONTRACT ORDER NO. IN ITEM 10A.
	B. THE ABOVE NUMBERED CONTRACT/ORDER IS MODIFIED TO REFLECT THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES (such as changes in paying office, appropriation date, etc.) SET FORTH IN ITEM 14, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF FAR 43.103(b).
	C. THIS SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT IS ENTERED INTO PURSUANT TO AUTHORITY OF:
	D. OTHER (Specify type of modification and authority)

E. IMPORTANT: Contractor ☐ is not, ☐ is required to sign this document and return \_\_\_\_\_ copies to the issuing office.

Except as provided herein, all terms and conditions of the document referenced in Item 9A or 10A, as heretofore changed, remains unchanged and in full force and effect.

15A. NAME AND TITLE OF SIGNER (Type or print)		16A. NAME AND TITLE OF CONTRACTING OFFICER (Type or print)	
15B. CONTRACTOR/OFFEROR	15C. DATE SIGNED	16B. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	16C. DATE SIGNED
_____ (Signature of person authorized to sign)		_____ (Signature of Contracting Officer)	

This amendment 002 is hereby issued to answer the following clarification questions:

Question 1: We assume that the referenced 6-page certifications section is not counted within the 50-page limit. Is our assumption correct?

Answer 1: Yes, your assumption is correct the 6-page certifications section is not counted within the 50-page limit.

Question 2: We assume that front matter (title page, table of contents, compliance matrix, and similar) are not counted within the 50-page limit. Is our assumption correct?

Answer 2: The title page, table of contents and executive summary are not counted in the 50-page limit for the Technical Proposal. The Executive Summary is limited to 3 pages. Number the pages of the Technical Proposal consecutively, 1-50.

Question 3: We assume that draft or sample plans or reports required by the solicitation may be included as attachments, and are not counted within the 50-page limit. Is our assumption correct?

Answer 3: Yes. ED is making a change and will not limit the number of pages in the appendix. Resumes shall be no more than two pages maximum.

Question 4: We assume that any single-sided, 11x17 fold-out would count as two pages within the 50-page limit. Is our assumption correct?

Answer 4: Yes, your assumption is correct 11x17 fold-outs will count as two pages.

Question 5: We assume that, for figures and tables, a minimum font size of 8 point is acceptable (provided that the type is legible). Is our assumption correct?

Answer 5: Yes, your assumption is correct, a font size of 8 point is acceptable (provided that the type is legible) for figures and tables.

Question 6: To assist with system design and associated pricing, will the Government please provide additional current system usage details (e.g., maximum concurrent users, daily clicks, daily search requests, etc.)?

Answer 6: During peak usage the current system processes between 30 – 70 searches per second.

Question 7: To assist with staffing and associated pricing, will the Government please provide the prior 2 years' monthly call volume for their toll-free number.

Answer 7: Assume the following information for estimating the service:

ERIC call center:

Phone: annual calls estimate = 1,500; monthly estimate = 125

E-mail: annual e-mail estimate = 1,040; monthly estimate = 87

National Library of Education (NLE) call center:

Phone: annual calls estimate = 696; monthly estimate = 58

E-mail: annual e-mail estimate = 360; monthly E-mail estimate = 30

Reference for Question 8: Section L.1 311-17 Additional Instructions for Proposals for ADP Security Compliance (February 1988). Potential offerors are directed to the security requirements under the clause entitled "Information Technology System Security Requirements", ED 307-13. Technical proposals must include a separately detailed plan for meeting these requirements, including any necessary subcontract applications. Submission of these plans shall serve as certifications of the offerors' full intent for compliance.

Question 8: Is this plan part of the 50 page limit?

Answer 8: No.

Reference for Question 9: Section L.10 Technical Proposal – Instructions to Offerors (Preparing Your Proposals) - The text of the technical proposal shall not exceed 50 pages (single spaced). Offerors shall use 12-point fonts with a minimum of one inch margins on all pages. Resumes and lists of current ED contracts and grants may be included in a separate packet from the main proposal and shall not exceed 50 pages. If offerors have not previously responded to ED's pre-solicitation notice, then offerors shall add no more than 6 pages (single spaced) for the certifications section, as explained below.

Question 9: A slightly smaller font would allow us to present graphics and tables appropriately. Would the Government consider revising the 12-point font requirement for graphics and tables?

Answer 9: Minimum font size of 8 point is acceptable (provided the type is legible) for figures and tables.

Reference for Question 10: Section L (page 41 of 48) Oral Presentation Guidelines paragraph (C) Offerors are free to structure their oral presentations using PowerPoint slides not to exceed 50 slides. Use of these visual aids is at the offeror's discretion. For those offerors using PowerPoint slides, provide six paper copies for the oral presentation. Contractor shall provide all equipment as necessary.

Question 10: Please confirm that the oral presentation slides are not due until we receive notification to present.

Answer 10: Slides are due at the oral presentation.

Question 11: Will the government provide specifics on equipment that will be required (projector, projector screen, computer, etc.), format of the presentation (for instance: will it be a round-table discussion or podium presentation, etc.)

Answer 11: It is up to the offeror to decide what equipment they need to best present their information. The room will have chairs and a table. All equipment is to be provided by the offeror. ED is anticipating a stand up presentation by offerors.

Reference for question 12: Section L.12 311-2a GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS (MAY 2008) reads "The Department of Education requires no more than 3 (three) Past Performance forms. See Attachment J"

Question 12: We are unable to find Attachment J in the solicitation package. Did the Government mean to refer us to Attachment C – Contractor Performance Evaluation? Also, please confirm that the Government requires no more than three contractor performance evaluation forms to be returned directly to the Department of Education and that they will not be part of our Past Performance Report submission.

Answer 12: The sentence "The Department of Education requires no more than 3 (three) Past Performance forms. See Attachment J" is a header to clarify Clause L. 13 314-1 Past Performance Report. It has nothing to do with clause L.12 311-2a General Instructions. Yes, "See Attachment J" is a typo it should be Attachment C – Contractor Performance Evaluation. The purpose of the header to clause L.13 314-1 is to clarify that ED requires no more than three forms rather than four forms. The Attachment C – Contractor Performance Evaluation forms should be part of the Past Performance Report.

Reference for question 13: Section L.13 314-1 PAST PERFORMANCE REPORT (MAR 1996) reads "A. Each offeror shall submit information about its most recent four contracts, completed in the last three years or currently in process, which are of similar size, scope, complexity or, in any way, are relevant to the effort required by this solicitation. If the offeror's last four similar contracts are all currently in process, submit the last three similar contracts currently in process, and the most recent similar contract completed within the last three years.

Question 13: Please clarify if the Government wants us to submit three or four contracts as our past performance report.

Answer 13: You may submit three contracts.

Reference for question 14: L-10 Technical Proposal, Section II. Staffing "Provide position descriptions and 2-4 page resumes for key personnel that demonstrate their expertise directly related to contract requirements. In addition, specify the task(s) or activity(s) to which each key personnel will be assigned, and specify the amount of time that each will be dedicated to the contract. Provide shorter 1-page resume summaries for all other staff and any outside consultants, including indexers and abstractors."

Question 14: The current requirement to provide resumes of key and other staff in addition to identifying steering committee members and subject matter experts provides unfair advantage to the incumbent contractor since they already have current staff in place. We request the Government allow the contractors to provide resumes of key personnel only with the proposal and submit names of other personnel, steering committee members, subject matter experts, etc. after contract award.

Answer 14: ED requires resumes. Resumes must be for all staff, experts, consultants and subcontractors. Resumes may be up to two pages maximum.

Question 15: Will the Government require a copy of Contingency offers with resumes if we have to go outside of our company or our subcontractors cannot fill Key personnel with current employees? If contingency offers are required, will this page count in the 2-4 page requirement?

Answer 15: Yes, resumes are required. Resumes must be for all staff, experts, consultants and subcontractors. Resumes may be up to two pages maximum. Commitment Letters (or Contingency offers) are also required. They are in addition to the two page limit for resumes.

Question 16: We request that the Government grant an extension to all bidders until March 17, 2009.

Answer 16: ED is extending this RFP to 1:00 PM EST on or before April 16, 2009.

Reference for question 17: Section L, Task 2, para 2.5. ERIC Activities with the National Library of Education reads "f. The contractor shall participate in a virtual reference desk serving all types of libraries to help them better respond to education questions as needed, or as appropriate."

Question 17: Does the Government require the contractor to staff a virtual reference desk separate from the customer service support required in Task 1.9? How often and what hours should the contractor staff the virtual reference desk?

Answer 17: Yes. Estimate two hours each day, Monday – Friday.

Question 18: What is the anticipated Base year Start Date and Base Year end Date? Ex. April 1, 2009 – March 30, 2009 or April 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009 for Base Year?

Answer 18: The Base Year is anticipated to be from June 29, 2009 – June 28, 2010.

Question 19: Should we anticipate each option period will be for one year from the end date of Base year?

Answer 19: Yes.

Question 20: Can we use our own pricing template or does the Government have a set standard template to use?

Answer 20: The Government does not have a standard template. ED requires offerors to provide the total annual price for each year (to include each Option Period) of the contract with the Award Fee and without the Award Fee. In addition ED requires that the costs for Task 4 be broken out separately from other costs (for the Base and each Option Period). Also, ED requires a monthly total for each of the contract years.

For example: Total Price (minus Task 4 price) for each Year with Award Fee, Total Price (Minus Task 4 price) for each Year without Award Fee, Total price for Task 4 for each year with Award Fee, Total price for Task 4 without Award Fee. ED also needs the total price for each month, with the price for Task 4 listed separately (for each month). There should be no Award Fee listed in the monthly total.

Question 21: H.7 Key Personnel Designation, page 11 of RFP, Key Personnel lists Key Personnel as TBD. Please confirm the key personnel listed in Section II Staffing on page 37 is the correct listing of required key personnel.

Answer 21: Section II Staffing, page 37 on the RFP, refers to the information that offerors will provide regarding their key personnel and staffing. Clause H.7 307-2 Key Personnel Designation is the clause that ED will use to list, in the awarded contract, the names of the key personnel. It is not known at this time who will be the key personnel so that is why ED wrote "to be determined".

Question 22: The response limit for the technical proposal is listed as 50 pages, however an additional 6 pages is granted for offerors that did not respond to the pre-solicitation notice. Does the Government wish for the certifications section to be delivered in a separate document or should it be included in the technical proposal volume?

Answer 22: Include certifications with the technical proposal; label this part accordingly, Certifications: Pre-solicitation Information, Corporate Capabilities. The six pages will not count against the 50 page limit.

Question 23: Is it expected that the offeror's price proposal will include compensation for the Content Experts? Or are these personnel compensated directly by the Department?

Answer 23: Yes. Offeror's price proposal should include compensation for the Content Experts as these experts are not compensated directly by ED.

Question 24: Is it expected that the offeror's price proposal will include compensation for the Steering Committee Members? Or are these personnel compensated directly by the Department?

Answer 24: Yes. Offeror's price proposal should include compensation for the Steering Committee Members as these experts

are not compensated directly by ED.

Question 25: Section II, Tasks 4.1 and 4.2.3.b discuss the development of an online system. However, the ERIC Transfer Plan (Attachment F) indicates the system will be transferred to the new contractor (source code, documentation, etc.). Are offeror's expected to receive the existing system and assume operations and maintenance activities or are offeror's supposed to develop/propose a completely new system?

Answer 25: Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the PWS. The ERIC Exhibit 300 which includes a Technical Reference Model (TRM) with service specifications is for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 26: The current due date is March 10, 2009. Would the government consider extending the due date to March 24, 2009?

Answer 26: ED is extending this RFP to 1:00 PM EST on or before April 16, 2009.

Question 27: Is the ERIC application/website currently hosted off-site at a non-Department of Education facility? If so, where?

Answer 27: Yes, the ERIC application/website is currently hosted at the contractor's site. It is expected that the new contractor will house the new application at their facilities.

Question 28: ERIC currently provides an 800# for help desk operations. Is the ERIC help desk included in this SOW? If so, can details be provided on call volumes, expected SLAs and the #s of CSRs required?

Answer 28: Please see answer to question number seven.

Question 29: Are there specific actions or deliverables required in support of Certification & Accrediation efforts?

Answer 29: Yes, the deliverables are referenced in the Performance Work Statement under Tasks 4 and 5.

Question 30: In L.10, the RFP states "Offerors shall use 12-point fonts with a minimum of one inch margins on all pages". Can the offerors use smaller font for graphics, tables and figures?

Answer 30: See response to question number 5.

Question 31: L.10 Technical Proposal, Instructions to Offerors, page 36 of the Solicitation states: The text of the technical proposal shall not exceed 50 pages (single spaced). Would the Government consider excluding cover letters, table of contents, compliance matrix, PMP and EVM reports from this page count?

Answer 31: See response to question number two.

Question 32: In L.9, the Amendment states "Accordingly the successful offeror for this 2009 ERIC procurement cannot provide services under the ERIC Quality Assurance contract. In addition, this provision prohibits any potential offeror from using proprietary information gained in the performance of the QA contract when submitting a proposal for the ERIC contract." Offeror assumes that this clause is applicable to services provided in 2008 under the current ERIC Quality Assurance Contract ED-07-DO-0267 and precludes the current contract holder from bidding on this RFP in any capacity. Please confirm.

Answer 32: L.9 Amendment, Conflict of Interest: This amendment is applicable to services provided in 2008 under the current ERIC Quality Assurance Contract ED-07-DO-0267. The US Department of Education is not precluding any responsible offeror from submitting a proposal for the ERIC recompet. It is the Government's intent that the winning offeror for this current ERIC procurement will not provide services under the ERIC Quality Assurance contract. It is up to each responsible offeror to submit a Conflict of Interest Plan which the Department will evaluate to assist us in determining the best value to the Government.

Question 33: What is the anticipated period of performance for the Base and Option Years?

Answer 33: ED anticipates the base year period as June 29, 2009 - June 28, 2010, and the four option years to follow this date sequence.

Question 34: Are all contractor employees required to undergo personnel security screening by the Department or only the ones who will be working in a Government facility?

Answer 34: Only those contractor employees working in a government facility.

Question 35: Are the slides used at orals to be included in the redacted proposal?

Answer 35: Yes.

Question 36: The description of historical materials describes materials to be converted to electronic format. Can these materials be removed from the library? Are these materials "fragile" requiring special equipment? Can bound volumes be disassembled? If these materials can be disassembled what level of assembly must they be returned in?

Answer 36: Yes, the materials can be removed from the NLE, but the documents per volume are of varying sizes. The materials are "fragile". Bound volumes cannot be disassembled.

Question 37: Is the estimated LOE of 48,000 inclusive of all contract activities? Please clarify. If an offeror's estimate is higher or lower than the estimated 48000 hours, will the proposal be considered compliant?

Answer 37: ED is amending the Level of Effort as follows: the level of effort is estimated at 81,000 hours per year inclusive of all contract activities. These numbers are furnished for the offeror's information only and are not considered restrictive for proposal purposes. An offeror's estimate that is higher or lower will still be considered compliant.

Question 38: Are the deductions listed for unacceptable performance to be taken from the award fee pool or the fixed price?

Answer 38: The deductions listed in the Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP) are to be taken from the fixed price of the contract. Therefore the QASP is revised and is attached. In addition, Clause H. 18 Award Fee is hereby revised to read as follows:

#### H.18 Award Fee

This contract shall contain an award fee evaluation which will be conducted annually in accordance with the attached Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP). Evaluation of the Contractor's performance will be based on the contract Activities and Standards contained in the Surveillance Plan. In order to make any change(s) to the Surveillance Plan the Government and the contractor shall agree to a modification of the contract, that changes the language in the Surveillance Plan, a minimum of 30 days before the start of the year for the contract. The contractor will receive the incentives listed for superior performance of the key deliverables. The deduction, for unacceptable performance of the key deliverables, will be taken from the fixed price of the contract.

Question 39: Should the amounts shown as "Award Fee available" in page 1 of the QASP be included in the total fixed price amount quoted?

Answer 39: Offerors should include the Award Fee available (from the QASP graph on page 7) in their total fixed price amount for each year. Offerors should supply the total fixed price per year with Award Fee and without Award Fee. Also see response to question number twenty.

Question 40: Page 42, Section L.12 states: The Department of Education requires no more than 3 (three) Past Performance forms. See Attachment J.

Page 43 Section L.13, A. States: Each offeror shall submit information about its most recent four contracts ... Page 43 Section L.13, A, 4. states: Paragraph E. below requires you to send a copy of the "Contractor Information Form" to each of your references. Page 44, Section L.13, E states: No later than the date proposals are due under this solicitation (see Block 9 of Standard Form 33), send a copy to each of your four references of the "Contractor Performance Information" form attached to this solicitation. Does the government request that Attachment C to be returned from 3 or 4 our clients? Does the government intend for offerors to submit information about three or four contracts as part of our Past Performance Report, required by L.13?

Answer 40: See response to question number twelve.

Question 41: Would the Government consider expanding the Past Performance Reference timeframe for the completed contract from 3 years to 5 years?

Answer 41: Clause 314-1 Past Performance Report (MAR 1996) states that the timeframe for the Attachment C – "Contractor Performance Information" forms for recently completed contracts is three years. The Department does not see a reason for extending this timeline.

Question 42: Is it the government's intent that the Past Performance Reports are to be included in the Corporate Capabilities Section of the Technical Proposal (as stated on Page 36), and also submit them separately as required on page 42, L.12

General instructions? If so, we respectfully request that the 50 page response limitation exclude the information contained in the PP Reports.

Answer 42: See response to question number twelve and question number 43 below.

Question 43: Are offerors to submit the past performance records included in the Technical proposal in L.11 D(3) Business Volume also?

Answer 43: It is the Government's intent that the Attachment C – "Contractor Performance Information" forms will be included in a separately bound volume in the proposal entitled "Past Performance Report" as referenced in Clause 314-1 Past Performance Report, page 42. The Responsibility of Prospective Contractor (referenced in paragraph D on page 42) section is referencing categorical descriptions and statements made by the offeror in their technical and business proposal. It may not be an actual evaluation form.

Question 44: Please Clarify whether there is a requirement for a Technical Documentation Deliverable? There is a Task 4.10 in Section L of the RFP, but no corresponding section in the Statement of Work.

Answer 44: ED is deleting Task 4.10 within Section L.10 Technical Proposal. There is no technical documentation required.

Question 45: Page 40, of the solicitation, states "use 240 hours as an annual estimate for this service". Is the 240 hours per person or for the entire service?

Answer 45: Use 240 hours as an annual estimate for the entire service.

Question 46: Page 38 of the solicitation, this section refers to 1.5.4 in the PWS, but the PWS does not contain this sub-paragraph although it is referenced on page 38 of the Solicitation.

Answer 46: The reference to 1.5.4 should be removed from page 38 of the solicitation.

Question 47: There are several references to cost information as a requirement in the instructions for the Technical Proposal. It is our understanding that pricing information should not be included in the technical proposal. Please confirm that cost related information requested in the following tasks are to be provided in the Business Volume.

Answer 47: Cost related information should only be provided in the Business Volume of the Proposal.

Question 48: In the PWS, section 1.11, it states "Within nine months after contract award, the contractor shall update as needed and implement a quality control plan, which was included in the proposal that meets best industry practices for ensuring accuracy and eliminating errors in database and website content and software." However, in Section III, Task 1, section, 1.11, Quality Control, it states to provide an outline and process of a Quality Control Plan. Can you please clarify what the offeror is expected to submit? If a quality control plan is required can this be provided as an attachment due to the 50 page limit?

Answer 48: ED does not understand the question as stated to reveal any inconsistency in the requirement to include a quality control plan in the 50-page limit of the Technical Proposal. Offerors should provide an outline and process of a Quality Control Plan in their proposal. Nine months after contract award the contractor shall provide a complete and fully detailed deliverable.

Question 49: Page 38 of RFP requests documentation of EVM reports with explanations of variances and approved changes. Due to page count limitations can this documentation be submitted as an attachment exempt from the 50 page limit?

Answer 49: The report can be included in the appendix.

Question 50: What is the historical annual volume of licensing requests for this contract?

Answer 50: See Performance Work Statement (PWS), page 1.

Question 51: Will legal resources from the US government be available to the contractor in this endeavor?

Answer 51: No.

Question 52: What is the percentage of documents coming into the system with abstracts already written?

Answer 52: The majority of journal articles indexed in ERIC use publishers' abstracts.

Question 53: With regard to the existing microfiche archive of full-text non-journal documents and authorizations for ERIC dissemination, 1966 – 2004 (working masters) and microfiche archive of full-text non-journal documents and authorizations for ERIC dissemination, 1966 –2004 (camera masters): Can the government provide an estimate size of the collections, i.e. how many boxes, square feet required, number of shelves used now, to determine how much storage space the vendor needs to have available.

Answer 53: See PWS, page 21-22.

Question 54: Are there Librarians/Administrators that have different access than end users? If so, how many? How are they identified?

Answer 54: No.

Question 55: Are there any special users that require specialized support? If so, how many? How are they identified?

Answer 55: No.

Question 56: What is the level of support provided to the ERIC customer? For example: usability support.

Answer 56: See PWS, page 9.

Question 57: What are the five most common questions/issues? For example, in technical support, what are the 5 most common questions/issues users call for seeking assistance?

Answer 57: Examples of call questions include the following: how to calls, user ID/password administration for My ERIC, information questions, outage/break questions.

Question 58: Telephonic Support: Aside from the 1-800-Call-Eric line, are there any other numbers users or any ERIC user can call for support?

Answer 58: The National Library of Education.

Question 59: What phone network or system do you use?

Answer 59: ED does not have access to this information.

Question 60: Is there an automated customer service attendant used? What are the options off of the AA?

Answer 60: Offerors are expected to provide their own approach to customer service as required in the Performance Work Statement (PWS).

Question 61: Email E-Form: Do these emails route into Outlook? Is this a shared inbox? Do the customer service reps respond to customers with their own email address or do they send "From" a specified address? Are there any other channels for a customer to contact support? Current hours of support are 8am-8pm M-F - Is after-hour support provided? (i.e., pages, BlackBerry, voicemail, etc..) Does customer service support any other language besides English?

Answer 61: Offerors are expected to provide their own approach to customer service as required in the PWS.

Question 62: What is the volume and timing for each support channel (calls, emails, chat sessions, other), inbound and outbound, month by month for the past 3 years and year -to-date?

Answer 62: Call volume was provided in an earlier response to question number seven. With respect to the most recent annual response timing for ERIC call center activity, the estimated time for a call answered is 22 seconds.

Question 63: What are the: Service level goals by call type? Average call/service duration? Peak times for support (by day and year)? Projected service volumes for the next calendar year based upon current trends, planned marketing activities and future releases for each support channel (calls, email, etc.).

Answer 63: Previous response to question number 7 has provided call response times. The median time to resolve an open ticket is 2 minutes, based on the most recent annual data. Offerors are expected to provide their own approach to customer service plans (including goals and planned marketing activities) as required in the Instruction to Offerors.



Question 64: In the Performance Work Summary, Section 1.9.1, it reads: "The service shall be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and response times for calls shall be no more than 5 seconds." Would the government please clarify what is meant by response time?

Answer 64: The time it takes to answer a call by beginning a conversation with a user.

Question 65: Are customer requests that cannot be resolved by the first level representative escalated to a second level group or team? If so, what percentages of services are escalated to a second level? Who is currently providing second level support? How are these issues escalated? Are any services escalated directly to the development team? If so, what percentage? What is the Mean Time to Resolution for escalated issues?

Answer 65: Yes, there is currently an escalation path for call tickets. Based on the most recent estimate of annual data, no calls have required escalation. Offerors should propose their own approach to customer service as required in the PWS.

Question 66: What are the tools the incumbent is using for website and database usage metrics? What data and reports are they presenting?

Answer 66: Offerors should propose their own approach to customer service as required in the PWS.

Question 67: There is no mention of software in the transfer plan. Will the search engine software be transferred?

Answer 67: The ERIC Exhibit 300 which includes a TRM with service specifications, is for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 68: What is the database software used to managed the database files?

Answer 68: The ERIC Exhibit 300 attached to the original RFP was in text file format. If you go to the following website you will be able to see the original Exhibit 300 format:

<http://www.ed.gov/exhibit300/fy2009/by09eric.html>

Question 69: What is the total data store in GBytes for the production and production support systems?

Answer 69: ED does not have access to this information.

Question 70: What is the current Internet bandwidth required at peak usage to support the current search load?

Answer 70: The estimated peak load is in the range of 30 – 70 searches per second.

Question 71: How many searches per second is the current system processing during peak usage?

Answer 71: During peak usage the current system processes somewhere in the range of 30 – 70 searches per second.

Question 72: What is the method to transfer data/content to other vendors?

Answer 72: This information is available at <<<http://www.eric.ed.gov>>> under the page "Licensing Data from the Education Resources Information Center."

Question 73: How often is the incumbent providing a data transfer to other vendors?

Answer 73: See response to question 72 above.

Question 74: What is the search engine currently used for ERIC?

Answer 74: See the ERIC Exhibit 300:

<http://www.ed.gov/exhibit300/fy2009/by09eric.html>

Question 75: Will the conversion programs be transferred to the new vendor?

Answer 75: ED does not understand what is meant by "conversion programs". All assets to be transferred are identified in

the ERIC Transfer Plan published as part of this solicitation.

Question 76: Will all the production systems being transferred?

Answer 76: Specify what is meant by "production systems". All assets to be transferred are identified in the ERIC Transfer Plan. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 77: The PWS references search volume levels of 93 million searches in 2007; are peak volume and performance metrics available for review?

Answer 77: ED does not have access to this information.

Question 78: What is the method of receiving new content?

Answer 78: See <<http://www.eric.ed.gov>>, brochure, Indexing Materials in ERIC.

Question 79: Is the content that is made available to other search engine providers incremental data or the entire ERIC content?

Answer 79: ED does not understand what is meant by "incremental data".

Question 80: What are the options given for transferring the data to other providers? Tape, FTP, etc?

Answer 80: ED does not understand what is meant by "other providers". See response to question 78 if referring to content providers.

Question 81: Can the providers choose to transfer historic data?

Answer 81: Yes, providing the content complies with the ERIC Selection Policy.

Question 82: Will the winning provider assume any software license costs such as the search engine?

Answer 82: Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the PWS. The ERIC Exhibit 300, which includes a TRM with service specifications, is for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 83: Are there high level architectural diagrams of the ERIC system available for potential contractors to review?

Answer 83: See the ERIC Exhibit 300 published as part of this solicitation.

Question 84: The following items appear to be missing from the asset list. Will the government provide them? If so, will they be available immediately to bidders? 1) Documentation capturing system requirements, 2) Test plans; test documentation 3) QS documentation.

Answer 84: Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the PWS. The Exhibit 300, which includes a TRM with service specifications, is for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 85: "ERIC Legislation and Topics" references laws that need to be met; is it fair to assume the current ERIC system is in compliance with these laws?

Answer 85: Yes.

Question 86: Is the current site compliant with FRA/Rehabilitation Act Section 508?

Answer 86: Yes.

Question 87: The PWS states "the contractor shall acquire and archive in the ERIC digital library the full-text of all reports and other documents published by the Department of Education within one month after the release of the documents." What format does the Department of Education release this information in?

Answer 87: Department of Education documents are made available on several websites, generally available at <[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)>. However, there is no single, comprehensive source for all reports, and culling all Department materials is a goal requiring a vendor approach, strategy, and solution. See PWS, page 12. At this time, ERIC uses EDPubs as the source for available these materials.

Question 88: The PWS references "harvesting software"; does the current ERIC system utilize such software? Is this something the contractor will need to build?

Answer 88: This is dependent upon the offeror's technical solution. Reference the ERIC Transfer Plan and ERIC Exhibit 300; it is up to the offeror to craft their own complete technical solution.

Question 89: Does the system currently meet the criteria in PWS Sections 4.1, 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.2, 4.2.3?

Answer 89: ED does not understand the relevance of this question to the requirements of this solicitation.

Question 90: Does the current system have manual processing steps when creating new data online?

Answer 90: Yes.

Question 91: Does the current system use a commercial workflow solution to drive the production processes? If so, which solution?

Answer 91: See the ERIC Exhibit 300.

Question 92: Is there a process to edit/correct data after it has been placed online?

Answer 92: Yes.

Question 93: General, in what way do the Steering Committee, Content Experts and Library Committee work together?

Answer 93: See the PWS for specific activities of the committees.

Question 94: What are the current selection criteria for nomination and/or selection to the ERIC Steering Committee? Once selected, how long is the term for membership?

Answer 94: See the PWS for Steering Committee qualification. Members serve for 3-year terms.

Question 95: Is there currently an established regular schedule for the Steering Committee in place? Could the government provide the schedule to vendors for planning and scoping purposes?

Answer 95: See the PWS for communications activities with the Steering Committee.

Question 96: What is the level of authority for the Committee? Is this a chartered committee? Does the committee have a set of by-laws?

Answer 96: Advisory to the ERIC contractor. See <<<http://www.eric.ed.gov>>>, Steering Committee. This committee is not covered by the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 as amended. There are no by-laws.

Question 97: Are the procedural rules established? Is there a chair for the Committee? If so, how is the chair selected? How long is the term?

Answer 97: There are no "procedural rules established". Yes, there is a chair of the Steering Committee selected by the ERIC contractor, and term of office is dependent upon availability to serve and term of committee service.

Question 98: When was the last time the Committee met?

Answer 98: 2008.

Question 99: Is there documentation of meeting actions, decisions, and results such as meeting minutes, executive summaries, or meeting notes? Are they publicly available?

Answer 99: Yes. Meeting summaries are contract deliverables, but these materials are not published on the ERIC website.

The ERIC Transfer Plan schedule states that all contract deliverables produced during the current ERC contract will be transferred on September 11, 2009.

Question 100: What are the current selection criteria for nomination and/or selection to the Content Experts group?

Answer 100: See the PWS for Content Experts qualifications.

Question 101: Is there currently an established regular schedule for Content Experts in place? Could the government provide the schedule to vendors for planning and scoping purposes?

Answer 101: See the PWS for communications activities with the Content Experts.

Question 102: What is the level of authority for the Committee? Are they chartered?

Answer 102: Advisory to the ERIC contractor. See <<<http://www.eric.ed.gov>>>, Content Experts. This committee is not covered by the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 as amended.

Question 103: Are the procedural rules established? Is there a chair for the Experts? Is there a leader or chair for the each of the clusters?

Answer 103: There are no "procedural rules established". No.

Question 104: When was the last time the Content Experts met?

Answer 104: 2008.

Question 105: Is there documentation of meeting actions, decisions, and results such as meeting minutes, executive summaries, or meeting notes? Are they publicly available?

Answer 105: Yes. Meeting summaries are contract deliverables, but these materials are not published on the ERIC website. The ERIC Transfer Plan schedule states that all contract deliverables produced during the current ERC contract will be transferred on September 11, 2009.

Question 106: In addition to receiving guidance from the Steering Committee for selection standards and criteria, what is the relationship with the Steering Committee?

Answer 106: ED does not understand what is mean by "relationship with the Steering Committee". The Committee is advisory to the ERIC Contractor.

Question 107: Has the Library Committee been in existence either as an outgrowth of a user group or as another functioning committee?

Answer 107: No, this is a new committee.

Question 108: Have the selection criteria for nomination and/or selection to the Library Committee been established or proposed? If so, what are the selection criteria?

Answer 108: The qualifications for the Library Committee are in the PWS.

Question 109: By whom was the Library Committee chartered and when? If so, are the procedural guidelines or rules established?

Answer 109: The ERIC Library Committee does not exist at this time. This committee will not be covered by the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 as amended. There are no "procedural rules established".

Question 110: How is the leader of the Library Committee selected? What is the term?

Answer 110: See response to question number 109 above.

Question 111: Has the Committee officially met as the ERIC Library Committee?

Answer 111: No.

Question 112: Is there documentation of meeting actions, decisions, and results such as meeting minutes, executive

summaries, or meeting notes? If so, are they publicly available?

Answer 112: No.

Question 113: The labor mix for Key Personnel is very specific in the RFP. Would the government consider other proposed labor mixes based on vendor experience performing this type of contract?

Answer 113: Offers should respond to the Instructions regarding Key Personnel, but should feel free to propose personnel beyond the minimum key personnel positions as individual offerors' technical solution requires.

Question 114: Given the size, scope, complexity and visibility of this Department of Education contract, three weeks to prepare a response is quite rigorous. Would the government be willing to grant an extension of the proposal deadline to allow industry to prepare the best possible offering?

Answer 114: ED is extending this RFP to 1:00 PM EST on or before April 16, 2009.

Question 115: What is the percentage of total value that the government used to calculate the award fee levels?

Answer 115: ED reviewed the previous QASP to come up with the values in the new QASP.

Question 116: The RFP states that "Offerors shall be provided at least 3 days notice of their presentation date and time." What is the government's calendar window for Orals? Will they be scheduled in the week after proposal submission, for example?

Answer 116: ED anticipates that Orals will be on or about June 2 – 3, 2009.

Question 117: Is there a standard template for licensing content? If so, please provide such template.

Answer 117: See the PWS, page 11.

Question 118: How many active license agreements are currently in effect to license content from the database?

Answer 118: See the PWS, page 1.

Question 119: How many active license agreements are currently in effect to acquire content for the database?

Answer 119: See the PWS, page 1.

Question 120: How many license agreements are anticipated over the term of the contract to license content in or out of the database?

Answer 120: This cannot be predicted as the number depends on the success of the vendor in acquiring new sources. However, it is safe to assume that over time, ERIC will need to acquire a diminishing number of new agreements.

Question 121: What is the typical contracting practice for licensing content (firm stance on the template? Deviation from the template?)

Answer 121: Within the legal requirements as defined in the sample agreement referenced in the PWS on page 11, ERIC endeavors to be flexible and accommodating with content providers to fulfill the ERIC mission and maintain productive business relationships on behalf of ED.

Question 122: In Section L – Certifications – there is an indication that is a Level 3 IT project. Is this indicating a CMMI Level 3 or some other designation?

Answer 122: No, this is a federal designation. Level 3 projects have high complexity, and/or risk, and have government-wide impact. Examples include Government-wide initiatives (E-GOV, President's Management Agenda) or high interest projects with Congress, GAO, OMB, or the general public.

Question 123: Is the PM required to have CMMI Level 3 management experience?

Answer 123: No, this does not reference CMMI (Capability Maturity Model Integration); it refers to certification by Project Management Institute (PMI, <http://www.pmi.org/Pages/default.aspx>) certification.

Question 124: Reference Exhibit 300 I.A.11: I. A. 11. a. What is the current FAC-P/PM certification level of the project/program manager? Please provide an answer to this statement in Exhibit 300.

Answer 124: The Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM) establishes general training and experience requirements for program and project managers in civilian agencies. The P/PM for the ERIC project is a Level 3.

Question 125: The Draft SOW indicated a Transfer Plan and Inventory would need to be submitted to the COR for approval "within two months after contract award". Section L. Task 5.1 of the current RFP indicates the need to "provide a clearly written, documented plan and schedule the offeror will use to facilitate a smooth transition....." but does not indicate when that Transfer Plan should be submitted. Is this Plan required to be submitted with the proposal and if not, when is it required? It was noted that the incumbent's transition plan was dated February 10th 2009.

Answer 125: No, the Transfer Plan is not required to be submitted with the proposal. Attachment A, PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT, under 5.1 Transition-In Plan, states that to ensure seamless and continuous service, the contractor shall prepare and submit to the COR no more than 30 days following contract award, a clearly written, documented Draft Transition-In Plan and allowing 30 days for review and approval, a Final Transition-In Plan. The transition plan shall address activities and matters associated with assets; provide a proposed schedule; outline procedures to be followed during the transition period; and identify performance measures to monitor transition progress and corresponding key milestones. For the purposes of this competition, the incumbent's transition plan was recently updated which is why it bears the date of February 10, 2009.

Question 126: The Draft SOW did not indicate the need for a Transition-Out Plan as required by the current RFP in Section L, Task 5.2- "provide a clearly written, documented plan that the offeror will use for facilitating a smooth transition of assets. Include required training and transfer of all materials and supporting documentation that were prepared....". Is this Transition-Out Plan to be submitted with the proposal and if not, when is it required?

Answer 126: The offeror is not required to submit a Transition-Out Plan as part of the proposal; however, a Transition-Out Plan is required. Under 5.2. Transition-Out Plan, the final Statement of Work requires the contractor to prepare and submit to the COR no more than 180 days following contract award a clearly written, documented Draft Transition-Out Plan and allowing 60 days for review and approval, a Final Transition-Out Plan. This plan shall be updated and submitted to the COR no less than 90 days prior to the end of each contract option year. The transition plan shall address activities and matters associated with assets; provide a proposed schedule; outline procedures to be followed during the transition period; and identify performance measures to monitor transition progress and corresponding key milestones. The final plan for the base year and for each option year of the contract shall be approved by the COR annually.

Question 127: Past Performance --- In Section L of the RFP it states "the Department of Education requires no more than 3 (three) Past Performance forms (Attachment J). In Section L. Paragraph L.13 A. it states "Each offeror shall submit information about its most recent four contracts, completed in the last three years or currently in process. Both 3 and 4 are listed as the number of required past performances. Is the ED requesting 3 Past Performance forms and in addition requesting information regarding 3 or 4 recent contracts or are these one and the same?

Answer 127: No, the offeror needs only to provide information about three (3) contracts under past performance. See response to question number twelve.

Question 128: Section L. Paragraph L.13 E. states "Paragraph E. Requires respondents to send a copy of the "Contractor Performance Form" to each of four references. Again, just above in Paragraph A. it states 3 and 4. Which is correct?

Answer 128: Three is correct.

Question 129: Can one or more of the (3 or 4) Past Performance forms be provided by subcontractors?

Answer 129: L. 13 314-1 PAST PERFORMANCE REPORT (MAR 1996), A (page 43) addresses this:

Each offeror shall submit the following information as a separately bound part of its proposal for both the offeror and proposed major subcontractors. Major, as defined here and in the remainder of sections L and M regarding past performance, is any subcontractor that is subcontracted for a minimum of 25% of the total contract amount. Each major subcontractor shall identify the name of the prime contractor on each of its past performance forms. If the offeror has no relevant corporate or organizational past performance, the offeror may substitute past performance of a predecessor company or of the offeror's management

or proposed key personnel who have relevant experience.

Three (3) Past Performance Reports are required for the primary contractor and for each major subcontractor it intends to use.

Question 130: Does the Department of Education have a mechanism in place to allow the newly awarded contractor to obtain crucial information from the incumbent more quickly than September, as indicated on the CSC ERIC Transfer Plan? Items such as: Technical Documentation, FTP account information and data, Call Center Support Data, Committee Information, Content Expert Materials, Reference Materials, GFE, ERIC Collateral Materials, Database Vendor Contract Information, Collection Development Information, all of these materials are crucial to the maintenance and development of the project.

Answer 130: No, there is no mechanism that requires the current contractor to provide information earlier than stated.

Question 131: It is assumed that the successful contractor will take over hosting the ERIC system. To adequately plan for this requirement we need to know monthly usage statistics in terms of hits, concurrent users as well as any other metrics collected.

Answer 131: The statement "It is assumed that the successful contractor will take over hosting the ERIC system." is unclear. If the offeror means that the new contractor shall host ERIC at [www.eric.ed.gov](http://www.eric.ed.gov) using the technical solution it has proposed, then the answer is yes. If the offeror means that the new contractor shall host ERIC at [www.eric.ed.gov](http://www.eric.ed.gov) using the system used by the current contractor, then the answer is no.

Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the Statement of Work. The Exhibit 300 which includes a TRM with service specifications; is for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Monthly usage statistics from 2008 are provided as an attachment, since this text file does not allow special formatting.

Note: The current ERIC system is processing about 30-70 searches per second during peak load.

Question 132: What is the current hardware configuration in place to host the public facing ERIC?

Answer 132: This information is available at Exhibit 300.

Question 133: What software is being utilized in the ERIC configuration, i.e. Web server, database, content management system platform architecture etc.?

Answer 133: This information is available at Exhibit 300.

Question 134: Is the development of the Thesaurus creation being outsourced out of the U.S. at this time?

Answer 134: No, Thesaurus development is not outsourced out of the US.

Question 135: Page 12 of the RFP Section H.7 – Key Personnel Designation – states: "the following key personnel are considered to be essential to the work being performed: to be determined." On page 37 of the RFP, Section II – Staffing, Key personnel states 5 positions. Which is correct?

Answer 135: Please see response to question number twenty-one.

Question 136: The ERIC Transfer Plan indicates that source code for ERIC back office applications used to process and publish ERIC records will be delivered to include Workflow System, Agreements Management System, Serials Management System, and Crawler. Please describe the training and documentation that will be provided by the incumbent contractor to allow the successful winner of the contract to successfully take over, maintain and enhance this software?

Answer 136: Training, documentation and other aspects of the Transfer Plan shall be provided by the incumbent to the new contractor after the award of the contract.

Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the Statement of Work. The Exhibit 300, which includes a TRM with service specifications, and the Transfer Plan are for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 137: The ERIC Transfer Plan indicates that source code for ERIC back office applications used to process and publish ERIC records will be delivered to include Workflow System, Agreements Management System, Serials Management System, and Crawler. Please indicate if this software and content will be delivered as GFE on the hardware it is currently installed on? If not please provide an itemized and required equipment list with vendor product make, model and specification

information.

Answer 137: Source code and other aspects of the Transfer Plan shall be provided by the incumbent to the new contractor after the award of the contract.

Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the Statement of Work. The Exhibit 300, which includes a TRM with service specifications, and the Transfer Plan are for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 138: The ERIC Transfer Plan indicates that Web Content, HTML pages, Help area tutorials, graphics, files, and code for the <http://www.eric.ed.gov> public facing web site will be delivered. Please indicate if this software and content will be delivered as GFE on the hardware it is currently installed on? If not please provide an itemized and required equipment list with vendor product make, model and specification information.

Answer 138: Web Content, HTML pages, Help area tutorials, graphics, files, and code for the <http://www.eric.ed.gov> public facing web site and other aspects of the Transfer Plan shall be provided by the incumbent to the new contractor after the award of the contract.

Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the Statement of Work. The Exhibit 300, which includes a TRM with service specifications, and the Transfer Plan are for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 139: Please describe the Web content management system that houses the ERIC bibliographic data, thesaurus and full text PDF files. For example, is this a MARC based system, is it COTS software or developed by the incumbent?

Answer 139: Please see Exhibit 300.

Question 140: SOW 3.0 indicates that "The mission of ERIC is to provide a comprehensive, easy-to-use, searchable, Internet-based bibliographic and full-text database of education research and information for educators, researchers, and the general public." Section L Task 4.1 and 4.2.3.b require a response to Development of an online system. Please respond and let us know if this means that ED wants the successful contractor to implement a new system or simply to take over and maintain the existing solution?

Answer 140: Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the Statement of Work. The Exhibit 300, which includes a TRM with service specifications, and the Transfer Plan are for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 141: Reference SOW 4.2.3 c. This requirement discusses full text search. Does ED prefer to have a solution that searches the full text of digital documents along with their associated metadata? Currently ERIC only searches bibliographic data and provides a link to the full text electronic document.

Answer 141: This is the offeror's decision.

Question 142: SOW 4.3. requires the contractor to update and refine the workflow system as needed within 6 months after contract award. The incumbent's transition plan indicates that the workflow software will be delivered. Please indicate what is insufficient about the incumbent's current workflow solution.

Answer 142: The workflow system and other aspects of the Transfer Plan shall be provided by the incumbent to the new contractor after the award of the contract.

Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the Statement of Work. The Exhibit 300, which includes a TRM with service specifications, and the Transfer Plan are for information and reference. Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system.

Question 143: RFP Section L.10. page 36 discusses ED FISMA certification and accreditation. We understand this could be a lengthy process but this varies by agency and IT situation. Please describe this process at ED. Please also provide some estimated metrics as has been done in 1.5.1 so we can include this level of effort in the bid.

Answer 143: The level of effort required by an offeror to respond to ED FISMA certification and accreditation varies; metrics are unavailable. Information about the Bidder's Security Package: Security Requirements for Contractors Doing Business with the Department of Education is available at <http://www.ed.gov/fund/contract/about/bidders.doc>. Also, see The Handbook for Information Assurance Security Policy as all security requirements flow from this main document; it is available on the Department's Web site at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).



Question 144: RFP page 38, Section L. Task 1.1.3 - (EVM) asks the offeror to provide the latest scores. Please elaborate as it seems only the incumbent could respond to this question.

Answer 144: Task 1.3, Earned Value Management (EVM) and Business Case Reports, (there is no Task 1.1.3) as described on page 38 of the Instructions and in the SOW, is an essential activity of this contract. Because the ERIC contract is a Department Business Case, as well as an Exhibit 300, an offeror's proposal must demonstrate its capability in addressing this task. Offerors can provide information regarding any recent EVM report they have worked on.

Question 145: RFP page 39, Section L. Task 1.1.10 - Database vendors. This paragraph asks what tape format will be used to provide data to 6 database vendors. It seems that only the incumbent would know what the capabilities are of the 6 vendors that ED supplies ERIC data to, so we respectfully request that this question be revised.

Answer 145: Task 1.10. Database vendors, deals with making copies of the bibliographic and full-text database available to database vendors for redistribution. Instructions in L. 1.10 ask several questions of the offeror: Specify and briefly explain the data and tape format to be used for making the database and updates available for redistribution, including the relative advantages and disadvantages compared with other options; and explain how the offeror will encourage vendors to maintain database integrity and consistency and provide data on the numbers and types of organizations and the estimated number of end users that access the database. Base the cost estimate on providing tapes for 6 vendors. ED does not specify which 6 vendors to use.

Question 146: Is the existing ERIC public facing system built upon Oracle?

Answer 146: Please see Exhibit 300.

Question 147: If so, would ED entertain the option of building the ERIC metadata in a system other than Oracle?

Answer 147: This is the offeror's decision.

Question 148: Section L Task 2.2.5 page 39 indicates that the offeror should estimate digitization and processing of 15,000 pages of printed text and 10 bound volumes but this paragraph does not specify a time period as does paragraph 2.1 which indicates weekly. Please advise.

Answer 148: Task 2.5 is not a repetitive activity; please see Task 2.5 in the Statement of Work.

Question 149: Section L Task 4. page 40 paragraph 4.1.3 requires the offeror to describe a disaster recovery strategy. Due to the fact that the proposed solutions can vary drastically in technical capability and cost please indicate if the ED has a preference. For example, is real time failover required, can the system be down for a short period of time while a manual failover process is activated etc.

Answer 149: This is the offeror's decision.

Question 150: Section L Task 4. page 40 paragraph 4.1.3 requires the offeror to describe a disaster recovery strategy. Please describe the current acceptable current disaster recovery strategy.

Answer 150: This information is not provided; the offeror is required to offer a disaster recovery strategy.

Question 151: RFP section L Task 4.4.2.3 requires the offeror to discuss the database search engine. Please indicate what search engine is currently being utilized?

Answer 151: Please see Exhibit 300.

Question 152a-mm: RFP section L Task 4.4.2.3 requires the offeror to discuss the database search engine functionality and to suggest the best search engine. Please indicate at minimum the following so we can analyze the data to allow us to suggest the best search engine alternative for ED.:

- a. The total number of bibliographic records in ERIC
- b. The total number of full-text journal articles in ERIC
- c. The total number of full-text Book/Product Reviews
- d. The total number of full-text Books
- e. The total number of full-text Collected Works - General
- f. The total number of full-text Collected Works - Proceedings
- g. The total number of full-text Collected Works - Serials

- h. The total number of full-text Computer Programs
- i. The total number of full-text Creative Works
- j. The total number of full-text Dissertations/Theses
- k. The total number of full-text Dissertations/Theses - Doctoral Dissertations
- l. The total number of full-text Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses
- m. The total number of full-text Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers
- n. The total number of full-text ERIC Digests
- o. The total number of full-text ERIC Publications
- p. The total number of full-text Guides - Classroom - Learner
- q. The total number of full-text Guides - Classroom - Teacher
- r. The total number of full-text Guides - General
- s. The total number of full-text Guides - Non-Classroom
- t. The total number of full-text Historical Materials
- u. The total number of full-text Information Analyses
- v. The total number of full-text Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials
- w. The total number of full-text Machine-Readable Data Files
- x. The total number of full-text Multilingual/Bilingual Materials
- y. The total number of full-text Non-Print Media
- z. The total number of full-text Numerical/Quantitative Data
- aa. The total number of full-text Opinion Papers
- bb. The total number of full-text Reference Materials - Bibliographies
- cc. The total number of full-text Reference Materials Directories/Catalogs
- dd. The total number of full-text Reference Materials - General
- ee. The total number of full-text Reference Materials - Geographic
- ff. The total number of full-text Reference Materials - Vocabularies/Classifications
- gg. The total number of full-text Reports - Descriptive
- hh. The total number of full-text Reports - Evaluative
- ii. The total number of full-text Reports - General
- jj. The total number of full-text Reports - Research
- kk. The total number of full-text Speeches/Meeting Papers
- ll. The total number of full-text Tests/Questionnaires
- mm. The total number of full-text Translations

Answer to 152 a - mm: This answer is attached, since this text file does not allow for formatting.

Question 153: Who or what is the EDRS organization and how are they affiliated to ERIC?

Answer 153: EDRS stands for ERIC Document Reproduction Service; however, this service went out of existence 5 years ago when ERIC operations were consolidated under one contract. EDRS was responsible for producing and making available the ERIC microfiche.

Question 154: RFP section L Task 4.4.3 requests that the offeror provide screenshots of the workflow system. The ERIC transfer plan dated February 10th 2009 indicates that the Workflow system will be delivered. Please let us know when we can come to ED to view and capture these screenshots so we can comply with this paragraph.

Answer 154: Offerors shall respond to all aspects of the Statement of Work. The Exhibit 300, which includes a TRM with service specifications, is for information and reference.

Offerors are expected to develop their own complete technical solution and not assume that this solicitation is simply to operate and maintain the existing system. Therefore, offerors are expected to respond to Attachment A, PERFORMANCE WORK STATEMENT, 4.3. Workflow system which states that:

within six months after contract award, the contractor shall update and refine as needed the workflow system that was included in the proposal. The online workflow system shall capture data essential to tracking the metrics pertinent to the intake of journal and non-journal materials, e.g., cycle time from date of receipt and time to publication in ERIC including the number of records acquired, rejected, and published. It shall also document publisher and rights agreements to provide content and record the data transmittal format, e.g., FTP, e-mail, CD/DVD. It shall also include a journal claiming system to document periodicity of journal publications, number of issues, and date received. It shall also summarize the use of ERIC indexing and taxonomy terms and provide quality control activity and metrics for ensuring correct records according to the ERIC processing and metadata conventions. The contractor shall make the online workflow system accessible to the COR and a third party monitoring service.

The contractor shall implement the online workflow system after COR approval and no later than July 15, 2009.

The following instructions at L 10. Technical Proposal, Instructions to Offerors, Section III. Individual Tasks and Subtasks, Task 4. Maintain, Develop, and Secure the Information Technology (IT) System, 4.3. Workflow system which requires the offeror to provide one to three screen shots of the workflow system along with a simple step-by-step diagram and brief explanation of how the system works.

The ERIC transfer plan dated February 10, 2009 applies once the contract is awarded. Due to the RFP extension, ED will be revising the dates in the SOW and will post it as soon as possible.

Question 155: Page 41, Oral presentations indicates PowerPoint slides may be used. Is it also permitted to show other computer presentations? Can an Internet connection be provided for the Oral presentation?

Answer 155: Please see answer to question number eleven.

Question 156: Reference RFP Section M.1 (B) 3. The sentence discusses key personnel records. Does ED mean key personnel resumes?

Answer 156: No, "records" is correct.

Question 157: Reference RFP L.12 and L.10 RFP Section III. Please break down the level of effort referenced and provide historical levels of effort for the five task areas described in the RFP L.10 Section III.

Answer 157: The historical information requested cannot be provided; the level of effort for specific tasks is for the offeror to determine based on the total Level of Effort provided. ED is changing the estimated level of effort to 81,000 hours annually. This level of effort is furnished for informational purposes only and is not restrictive for proposal purposes.

Question 158: RFP L.6, page 33 indicates FAR 52.212-1, Commercial Items. It seems that this procurement is a services procurement and is not for procurement of a COTS commercial item. Please comment.

Answer 158: The definition of commercial item in FAR 2.101 includes services; commercial buy services are defined as:

(6) Services of a type offered and sold competitively in substantial quantities in the commercial marketplace based on established catalog or market prices for specific tasks performed or specific outcomes to be achieved and under standard commercial terms and conditions. For purposes of these services-

(i) "Catalog price" means a price included in a catalog, price list, schedule, or other form that is regularly maintained by the manufacturer or offeror, is either published or otherwise available for inspection by customers, and states prices at which sales are currently, or were last, made to a significant number of buyers constituting the general public; and

(ii) "Market prices" means current prices that are established in the course of ordinary trade between buyers and sellers free to bargain and that can be substantiated through competition or from sources independent of the offerors.

Question 159: Page 2 of the RFP lists only "Item No. – 0001". Are there any requirements for development of a CLIN structure? While we understand the procurement is a FFP award fee contract please advise about any requirements and stipulations for monthly progress payments.

Answer 159: Please see response to question number 20.

Question 160: Page 5 – Section B – Supplies or Services and Prices/Costs, B.2.a. – states that the Government solicitation includes unique standards and that the Government will accept use of a voluntary consensus standard instead of the Government-unique standard unless inconsistent with law or otherwise impractical. Yet, in B.2.c – it states that offers that do not comply with the Government-unique standards specified in this solicitation may be determined to be nonresponsive or unacceptable. Please explain this requirement and indicate which is correct?

Answer 160: B. 2 52.211-7, ALTERNATIVES TO GOVERNMENT-UNIQUE STANDARDS (NOV 1999) a., b., and c. are correct as presented. B.2.b. clarifies the proposal of alternative standards:

(b) If an alternative standard is proposed, the offeror must furnish data and/or information regarding the alternative in sufficient detail for the Government to determine if it meets the Government's requirements. Acceptance of the alternative standard is a unilateral decision made solely at the discretion of the Government.

Government-unique standards appear under each Task description in the Statement of Work, as appropriate.

Question 161: The NAICS code in box 10 of the SF1449 lists size standard 519120 – Libraries & Archives, yet on page 36, Section L.10 – Technical Proposal, it states “ED has identified ERIC as an IT project subject to the Information Technology Investment Management Process.” in accordance with the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 and OMB circular A-11. In light of the statement on page 36, the applicable NAICS code for this procurement is 518210 for Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services. Please modify this procurement to utilize the correct NAICS code.

Answer 161: The US Department of Education believes the current NAICS code is the best NAICS code for this procurement. While there is an IT component, the main purpose of the ERIC system is to provide for on-line library services.

Question 162: Please explain the change in Amendment 01 – Conflict of Interest. What is the name of the contractor that currently has the ERIC Quality assurance contract? It seems that based on the information provided that the ERIC Quality assurance contractor should be conflicted out and prevented from bidding on the ERIC contract.

Answer 162: Please see response to question number thirty-two. The current contractor is Information International Associates, Inc.

Question 163: Are funds available to award the base year of this contract?

Answer 163: Contracts office has not received funds at this time.

Question 164: Does ED specify if the work on ERIC is to be done onsite or offsite or is it up to the contractor to propose the most efficient scenario?

Answer 164: Work shall be conducted offsite.

Question 165: To allow time for ED to respond to questions asked by contractors and to allow for offerors to process ED's response we respectfully request a two to three week extension to the current submission date for proposals. In addition, we feel that an extension would not be injurious or otherwise detrimental to the best interests of the government and would enable all competitors a reasonable opportunity to respond by allowing sufficient time to prepare a proper proposal.

Answer 165: ED is hereby extending the RFP to 1:00 PM EST on or before April 16, 2009.

In order to assist large businesses in meeting their subcontracting goals, ED is providing the following information. [Http://web.sba.gov.subnet](http://web.sba.gov.subnet) is a website on which prime contractors can post subcontracting opportunities and potential subcontractors can look for opportunities.

All other terms and conditions remain the same and the closing date is hereby extended till 1:00 PM EST on or before April 16, 2009.